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The Harris Survey

66% See Conspiracy in Kennedy Slaying

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For the first time since the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963, a sizable majority of the American people (66 per cent) believes that the shooting was not the work of one man but was part of a broader plot.

Within the past 60 days, public confidence in the Warren Commission Report has been pared nearly by half. Seven out of every 10 Americans are convinced that there are still many "important" uanswered questions.

A major contributor to this swelling doubt is the investigation into the assassination by New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison. Nearly two out of three people say they have been following the events. Among these, there is an even division of opinion on the merits of the Garrison inquiry: 45 per cent believe it will shed new light on the assassination, while 46 per cent think not much will come of it.

All in all, one American in four has been converted to a belief in the conspiracy theory alleged by the New Orleans inquiry. One in three of the less well educated and one in five of the better educated have changed their minds.

From the beginning, the group most prone to criticize the findings of the Warren Commission and to believe the assassination was part of a broader conspiracy has been the less well educated, Low-income segment of the population. Although only half of those in this group have followed Garrison's activities, they have been most inclined to believe his allegations. People under 35 are more likely than their elders to suspect that Lee Harvey Oswald was not alone in the killing.

Since last September, the Harris Survey has asked carefully drawn cross-sections of the public:

"Do you feel the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was the work of one man or do you feel it was part of a broader plot or conspiracy?"

One Man or Broader Plot

	May '67	Feb. '67	Sept. '66
Part of broader plot	66%	44%	46%
Work of one man	19	35	34
Not sure	15	21	20

A breakdown of the latest results by key groups is revealing:

One Man or Broader Plot by Key Groups

	Plot	One man	Not sure
Nationwide	66%	19%	15%
By age			
Under 35	70	15	15
35-49	65	21	14
50 and over	65	18	17
By education			
Grade school or less	71	13	16
High school	69	15	16
College	57	30	13

With the rise in belief that the assassination was part of a broader conspiracy, conviction that the Warren Commission told the full story has dropped sharply:

"Do you feel that the Warren Commission report on President Kennedy's assassination told the full story, or do you feel that there are still many important unanswered questions?"

Warren Commission Report

	May '67	Feb. '67	Sept. '66
Told full story	18%	30%	32%
Still many unanswered questions	72	59	54
Not sure	10	11	14

The Garrison investigation in New Orleans has been followed by nearly two out of every three people in the country:

Followed Garrison Investigation

Followed	64%
Not followed	36

The 64 per cent were asked:

"Do you feel that the New Orleans investigation into the Kennedy assassination will shed real light on the killing or don't you think much will come of it?"

	Will shed light	Little come of it	Not sure
Total followed it:			
Nationwide	45%	46%	9%
By education			
8th grade or less	46	40	14
High school	48	44	8
College	39	54	7